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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine employers' satisfaction with blue-collar and clerical employees entering the nation's work force. In addition, the study measured employers' perceptions of the ability of their employees to be retrained. A total of 200 executive interviews, of approximately 2 minutes each, were collected from a national sample of "Fortune" 1000 and the top 200 privately held companies. Respondents were directly or indirectly responsible for the recruitment of personnel within their company. Some of the findings were the following: (1) about 36 percent of the employers rated their entry-level employees as satisfactory, 50 percent were neutral on this question, and 13 percent rated their entry-level employees as unsatisfactory; (2) about 16 percent of employers were satisfied with the training of entry-level employees, 34 percent were not satisfied, and 48 percent were neutral; (3) about half the employers were satisfied that their entry-level employees could be retrained, almost half were neutral on the question, and only 8 percent did not believe that the employees could be retrained; (4) 25 percent of the employers rated the nation's work force in general as unsatisfactory, 57 percent were neutral, and 14 percent saw the work force as satisfactory; and (5) most employers said that mathematical skills had decreased over the past few years. (KC)

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NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BUSINESS

WORK FORCE STUDY

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METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the National Alliance of Business (NAB) work force study was to determine employer's satisfaction with blue collar and clerical employees entering the nation's work force. In addition, the study measured employers' perceptions of the ability of their employees to be retrained.

A total of 200 executive interviews were collected by North Coast Behavioral Research Group, (a division of Wyse Advertising). The executive interviews were collected from a national sample of Fortune 1000 (Service 500 and Industrial 500) and the top 200 privately held companies (Dun's Business Rankings). All executives were interviewed at their place of business during normal working hours. The length of the interview was approximately two minutes. Interviewing was conducted between April 24 and April 27, 1990.

The results are generalizable to the Fortune 1000 and the top privately held companies with a 6% error rate and a 95% level of confidence.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire for the study was developed by NAB, Wyse advertising and North Coast Behavioral Research Group. The following information details the various topics included in the questionnaire.

- Determine the number of applicants that must be interviewed at the respondent's company to find one qualified candidate;
- Determine if the perceived number of interviews required to find a qualified candidate has increased, decreased or remained unchanged over the past five years;
- Respondents' rating, on a five-point scale, of their satisfaction with their entry-level employees overall competency, educational training and the ability to be retrained. In addition, respondent's level of satisfaction with the quality of the nation's work force in general was obtained;
- Respondent's agreement/disagreement with three statements regarding the educational skills of entry-level employees; and,
- Demographic questions relating to the respondents' job titles, ages and annual personal incomes.

Respondent Qualifications

All respondents were either directly or indirectly responsible for the recruitment of personnel within their company. Representative titles include:

- Vice President/Director of Personnel
- Vice President/Director of Human Resources
- Director of Corporate Staffing
- Director of Organizational Development
- Manager of Employment

Final Disposition of the Sample

The disposition of the sample is included in the following exhibit.

Type of Call	Industrial	Service	Private	Overall
Companies Contacted	230	363	302	895
Completed Surveys	54	80	66	200
Refusals	25	30	44	99
Interviewer Callbacks	205	260	168	633
Respondent Callbacks	64	91	59	214
Terminations	0	4	2	6
Not Qualified	8	9	28	45

RATIO OF QUALIFIED CANDIDATES

1990

Number of Candidates	Service (N=80)		Industrial (N=54)		Private (N=66)		Overall (N=200)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
5 or less	53	66.3	28	51.9	34	51.5	115	57.5
6-10	18	22.5	19	35.2	19	28.8	56	28.0
11-15	7	8.8	4	7.4	5	7.6	16	8.0
16-20	1	1.3	1	1.9	5	7.6	7	3.5
21-25	0	0.0	1	1.9	1	1.5	2	1.0
26 or more	1	1.3	1	1.9	2	3.0	4	2.0
Refused	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

TREND OVER FIVE YEARS

1990

	Service (N=80)		Industrial (N=54)		Private (N=66)		Overall (N=200)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Up	52	65.0	36	66.7	37	56.1	125	62.5
Down	8	10.0	3	5.6	9	13.6	20	10.0
Unchanged	20	25.0	15	27.8	20	30.3	55	27.5

Base = Segment Total

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION STATEMENTS

OVERALL

1990

	Unsatisfactory		Neutral		Satisfied		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\bar{X}$
The overall competency of entry-level employees at your company.	26	13.0	100	50.0	72	36.0	3.26
The educational training of entry-level employees.	68	34.0	97	48.5	32	16.0	2.65
The ability of entry-level employees to be retained.	16	8.0	84	42.0	96	48.0	3.45
The quality of the nation's work force in general.	50	25.0	114	57.0	28	14.0	2.90

Base = Segment Total
Note: Unsatisfied = (1,2)
Neutral = (3)
Satisfied = (4,5)

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION STATEMENTS

SERVICE INDUSTRY

1990

	Unsatisfactory		Neutral		Satisfied		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\bar{X}$
The overall competency of entry-level employees at your company.	9	11.3	45	56.3	26	32.5	3.23
The educational training of entry-level employees.	25	31.3	38	47.5	16	20.0	2.86
The ability of entry-level employees to be retained.	7	8.8	36	45.0	35	43.8	3.38
The quality of the nation's work force in general.	21	26.3	49	61.3	7	8.8	2.82

Base = Segment Total
Note: Unsatisfied = (1,2)
Neutral = (3)
Satisfied = (4,5)

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION STATEMENTS

INDUSTRIAL INDUSTRY

1990

	Unsatisfactory		Neutral		Satisfied		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\bar{X}$
The overall competency of entry-level employees at your company.	8	14.8	23	42.6	22	40.7	3.32
The educational training of entry-level employees.	20	37.0	25	46.3	9	16.7	2.80
The ability of entry-level employees to be retained.	4	7.4	21	38.9	29	53.7	3.56
The quality of the nation's work force in general.	12	22.2	32	59.3	9	16.7	2.96

Base = Segment Total
Note: Unsatisfied = (1,2)
Neutral = (3)
Satisfied = (4,5)

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION STATEMENTS

PRIVATE INDUSTRY

1990

	Unsatisfactory		Neutral		Satisfied		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\bar{X}$
The overall competency of entry-level employees at your company.	9	13.6	32	48.5	24	36.4	3.25
The educational training of entry-level employees.	23	34.8	34	51.5	7	10.6	2.73
The ability of entry-level employees to be retained.	5	7.6	27	40.9	32	48.5	3.45
The quality of the nation's work force in general.	17	25.8	33	50.0	12	18.2	2.94

Base = Segment Total
Note: Unsatisfied = (1,2)
Neutral = (3)
Satisfied = (4,5)

STATEMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL SKILLS

OVERALL

1990

	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\bar{X}$
Education, in general, has not kept up with the nation's technological growth.	17	8.5	32	16.0	151	75.5	4.04
Lack of educational skills in math has increased in the past five years.	21	10.5	32	16.0	144	72.0	3.94
Lack of educational skills in reading has increased in the past five years.	26	13.0	42	21.0	131	65.5	3.76

Base = Segment Total
Note: Disagree = (1,2)
Neutral = (3)
Agree = (4,5)

STATEMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL SKILLS

SERVICE INDUSTRY

1990

	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\bar{X}$
Education, in general, has not kept up with the nation's technological growth.	8	10.0	14	17.5	58	72.5	3.94
Lack of educational skills in math has increased in the past five years.	10	12.5	17	21.3	53	66.3	3.79
Lack of educational skills in reading has increased in the past five years.	13	16.3	18	22.5	49	61.3	3.63

Base = Segment Total
Note: Disagree = (1,2)
Neutral = (3)
Agree = (4,5)

STATEMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL SKILLS

INDUSTRIAL INDUSTRY

1990

	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\bar{X}$
Education, in general, has not kept up with the nation's technological growth.	3	5.6	5	9.3	46	85.2	4.31
Lack of educational skills in math has increased in the past five years.	4	7.4	6	11.1	42	77.8	4.10
Lack of educational skills in reading has increased in the past five years.	6	11.1	13	24.1	34	63.0	3.77

Base = Segment Total
Note: Disagree = (1,2)
Neutral = (3)
Agree = (4,5)

STATEMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL SKILLS

PRIVATE INDUSTRY

1990

	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\bar{X}$
Education, in general, has not kept up with the nation's technological growth.	6	9.1	13	19.7	47	71.2	3.94
Lack of educational skills in math has increased in the past five years.	7	10.6	9	13.6	49	74.2	4.00
Lack of educational skills in reading has increased in the past five years.	7	10.6	11	16.7	48	72.7	3.91

Base = Segment Total
Note: Disagree = (1,2)
Neutral = (3)
Agree = (4,5)

DEMOGRAPHICS

1990

AGE

	Service (N=80)		Industrial (N=54)		Private (N=66)		Overall (N=200)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
18-24	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
25-34	7	8.8	2	3.7	6	9.1	15	7.5
35-44	37	46.3	23	42.6	29	43.9	89	44.5
45-54	25	31.3	21	38.9	24	36.4	70	35.0
55-64	8	10.0	7	13.0	5	7.6	20	10.0
65+	1	1.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Refused	2	2.5	1	1.9	2	3.0	5	2.5

INCOME

	Service (N=80)		Industrial (N=54)		Private (N=66)		Overall (N=200)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
$ 30,000 or less	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5	1	0.5
$ 30,001-$ 40,000	7	8.8	1	1.9	4	6.1	12	6.0
$ 40,001-$ 50,000	6	7.5	1	1.9	10	15.2	17	8.5
$ 50,001-$ 60,000	11	13.8	3	5.6	12	18.2	26	13.0
$ 60,001-$ 70,000	7	8.8	4	7.4	7	10.6	18	9.0
$ 70,001-$ 80,000	8	10.0	6	11.1	9	13.6	23	11.5
$ 80,001-$ 90,000	2	2.5	3	5.6	4	6.1	9	4.5
$ 90,001-$100,000	3	3.8	3	5.6	1	1.5	7	3.5
$100,001-$150,000	9	11.3	4	7.4	3	4.5	16	8.0
$150,001 or more	9	11.3	19	35.2	4	6.1	32	16.0
Refused	18	22.5	10	18.5	11	16.7	39	19.5

Base = Segment Total